

2009-05-18 Emotions Fear Part 2

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SPEAKERS

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So, for those of you who were here last week, we had a, gave a talk and devotes discussion around the topic of fear. In the first of a series of talks on different emotions, and the practice of mindfulness in relationship to emotions. And there was some discussion at the end about what the topic would be for today. Anger was apparently of interest. But after I went home, and the next day or so I was thinking about it. And I thought that we're not finished with fear. And maybe I'm not.

So I thought, we

do seem to be a lot of energy or a lot of interest in this topic of fear. I think it's one that's pretty pervasive among people. And so I thought we would talk a little bit more about it and ask you, ask you a series of questions. There's many things that people can be afraid of. But if we analyze why we're afraid of them what we're actually afraid of sometimes, it's interesting to kind of realize that maybe we were not always so clear, but they actually what we're afraid of. So the one of the great fears that people have is a fear of death. And being able to somehow come to terms with death is a very important part of hopefully any spiritual tradition, but certainly a Buddhist tradition. And in Buddhism, people will actually practice very explicitly on the theme, the topic of death and variety of ways, sometimes even going and finding an opportunity to visit a corpse and spend time with that and somehow work with the feelings that come up the thoughts that come up the reactions that come up the but what are we afraid of were people afraid of when when they're afraid of death. And there's a surprisingly wide range of responses. There are some people who have no fear of death at all. But what they're afraid of is the suffering of dying. That's what they're concerned about. Then there's people who are quite afraid not of the process of suffering, but have some bits of the idea they have of annihilation, that implies to them that some big vacuum that they fall into just complete that emptiness or blank. Some people, especially people who believe in rebirth, then some occasionally people are quite afraid of what's next. Now it's not just a blank But rather it's, you know, if your karma is going to come back, they say that's what did it what is it get that gets reborn. And it's your karma, the karma, that momentum, the momentum of your karma they say. So if your karma has been unskillful and healthy, then you might come back as a frog. And maybe that's okay. Come back as a, you know, as all kinds of terrible returns as possible. So some people actually afraid of that. That's what they're afraid of. Some sometimes people are afraid of losing the connection to the loved ones. Somehow that's kind of the last separation. That's what they're most afraid of. Some people are afraid of. They're not afraid of death for themselves, but maybe they have responsibilities for other people. And so the fear hasn't What to do about the suffering that might visit the people who are left behind, like people who sometimes will have parents who have children sometimes I've known parents who have not been afraid to die until they had kids. And then once they had kids, well, they didn't want to die until you know, the police, the kids, the kids growing up. And so there's certain fear the consequences there. I knew one person who died

and one of his fears around dying was that he was going to was not gonna die, right. Is there a right way of dying? And he he bought all these books on death and dying. It kind of like to learn how it's done. So he can be sure to do it right. I think most people succeed sooner or later. And so it's kind of you know, it's kind of odd to associate the whole process of dying as something that you have to succeed at doing just the right way and make it look right and, and he'd be involved in spiritual practice. So some people are involved in spiritual practice sometimes have very high criteria of what it's supposed to look like when we die and they're afraid of not dying, beautiful beatific, kind of fading into the white light or whatever it might be. So there's a range of things people can be afraid of. And once we once we kind of go behind the veil of agenda, generalized fear of death, and look at the details of it, then it becomes a different exploration different thing that we're looking at working with.

So I think the call with any fear one of the calls one of the great approaches to it, is to question it. What is this fear about? What are we afraid What are we really afraid of here? And then once we kind of get a sense of what we're afraid of, then to decide what's the best way of practicing with it, what's the right way, the best way of working with it. And there's a variety of choices that we have how to work with fear. One, one choice, which is quite popular in places like in monastic circles, or in traditional Buddhist circles in Southeast Asia, is to use the strength of the mind to overpower that part of us that's afraid. So through a strong willpower, especially developing strong concentration, to overcome the fear to develop a mind that's clear and unhindered by the fear. And so you find a lot of stories in the in them in Thailand, for example, of monks, who will go off into a place meditative place, someplace where it's scary and scary, very scary place for a lot of these monks in Thailand is cemeteries are charnel grounds and especially in the old days when they just would, they would burn the bodies that and leave them kind of smoldering for a while. Or they go and meditate the deep in the jungles where they were tigers are Tigers still and are wild elephants. And they go there to go meditate places like that, because they want to confront their fear. And, and then how would they would confront their fears. So in the stories, at least they come down to us, the ones that survived is they will talk about being really still. And closing being in meditation and developing the meditation say, Well, if I'm going to die, this is a good way of dying and I'm just going to focus on my meditation object and really stay concentrated. And they would sometimes write graphically about breaking out in sweat and all that. I think it was a Ajahn Chah wrote about being alimonies charnel grounds when it places where they may be Burn bodies. And I guess there's a variety of different states of decay bodies around at night, middle of the night sitting there meditating. And then hearing footsteps Your eyes are closed, right? So the footsteps the charnel ground, you know, must be pretty scary. Ghosts, monsters, that dead. I don't know what they were afraid of, but then break out in sweat be quite afraid. But they committed to stay there Hang in there. And they would focus on their meditation practice and try to have until at some point, they over overrode their fear and the mind became clear and peaceful. And then they would survive until the morning and they were on troubled stories of Tigers growling nearby monks doing the same thing. So that's one approach is to use the strength of the mind to concentration In the mind to overcome it. And you know, most of us don't go looking for Tigers that kind of trouble. But some people do sometimes we'll choose to confront what they're afraid of. And not to work through the fear but rather override the fear with a strength of mind. Sometimes it's very wise sometimes necessary to do that. There was one woman here who went on retreat with me. in Boulder Creek, in a retreat center, we use there in the redwoods. And she was camping. And she didn't apparently, I don't know if she had ever camped before by herself in the woods, but she chose to camp. She chose to camp over the hill over kind of kind of away from everybody else in the woods, some distance and she came for a series of interviews with me the next few days, talking about how afraid she was to be out there in the middle of the woods by herself and how she wasn't sleeping. And they were the footsteps you know, deer raccoons or something. Probably, and it kept her awake. And after some days of this, I said to her, you know, why don't you just come move your tent closer? You know, you know everyone else's? And she said, No, no,

I'm going down because I want to confront that fear. I want to meet that fear and work with it. She had, again, hopefully had enough sense that there was a safe place to be it was mostly deer and raccoons. But she wanted to meet that and really work with it. So when she said that I said, Fine, you know, please, that's a worthwhile thing to do. So there's many things that people are afraid of. And I think overriding it sometimes is a very wise, because one of the things we're most concerned about one of these we're concerned about with fear is that fear not limit us. And if fear doesn't limit us, then

you know, we're not limited, and then we can hopefully make wiser choices of what to do. Another approach with fear is not to override it. But rather to weaken its pull and hold on us, not by a strength of mind to override it, but rather to look at it directly. And, and use the mindfulness to meet it, confront it, and hold it in awareness, and find a way to hold it in awareness. with mindfulness, it's gonna be soft or open or spacious, can kind of hold it and be there, learn the skills of mindfulness to be bring presence to it, and in that presence, dissolve the, the whole that fear has on us. So one just completely ignores it. And this would actually directly looks at it and then looking at it somehow dissolves the power that it has over us. The third approach is to analyze the fear to spend some time actually thinking about and reflecting what is it that I'm afraid of? And what is this fear about? And as I said last week, what is it that's being threatens. Because sometimes what's more interesting is not what we're afraid of out there, but rather what we think is being threatened in here. And it could be that what's being threatened in here is actually not something that is threatened. Or maybe it's not something we want to protect, because it's kind of, maybe it's our self image that maybe we're too caught up in. So to override it, to hold it in mindfulness, and then to analyze it, or at least three very significant ways of dealing with fear. A fourth way that comes also from someone analysis of it is to decide the fear is healthy and worthwhile. And then act accordingly. And that's also should be taken very seriously as an option because otherwise, you know, you don't want to just kind of use stupid meditation to kind of, you know, overcome fear that is there for a very good reason. So that is that is a background. Now I have a question for you. Why what's scary about spiritual practice?

what's scary about meditation practice, Buddhist practice, or spiritual practice in general. So what do you think? Your chance to set tell me?

I think mostly it's losing whatever concept of yourself you had that made you feel like a person in the world, in relationship to yourself into the world,

to losing your project yourself. If you have to orient yourself with the world and others

I think maybe idea of fooling yourself like you think you've gotten somewhere where you feel better, and then being afraid that maybe you won't later you'll find out later that you weren't you weren't where you thought you were.

You hadn't achieved that. I say, so be fooling yourself. So I think we have some spiritual attainment that we just fool's gold.

Fools go fool's gold, spiritual.

For me, I'm afraid that as I go further down the path,

I'll realize that it's asking things of me that I know I should do that I don't want to do

so I'm not going to go down that path because I don't want to have to do things that I don't want to do. Yeah, I don't know if you care to say but you have any things in particular, you could imagine that someone would be afraid of but

for the Buddhist

ideals, particularly, I feel I will always go after mosquitoes

after termites, and I love a good cocktail sometimes.

If I could elaborate on that a little,

I can give a very specific example of that with wise speech, which I can find very intimidating. When I've read some of the sutras and I, it is reinforced to me that I should be mindful before I speak, and as I speak, and after I speak and to check in with these things, and then there's times that are appropriate to speak and not appropriate to speak. Things that while somebody might want to say, they're not, you shouldn't say them. And you know what I mean? That that can cause great anxiety, that kind of thing and a lot of fear that I'm not going to do it right, that I'll fail.

So coming to spiritual teachings there, there's teachings about Right Speech reflecting, causing harm. And so once you have that standard, then you can measure yourself against that standard. And then you can fail and fail as a spiritual person or fail as a human being and

fail every day, multiple times a day.

The more the more the more you learn about spiritual ideals, the more you can fail you whenever you're better off before you learned about spirituality, because then you just kind of went through life and bumbled and you didn't realize it was a problem and now everything's a problem. Good is also the fear that the teacher My call on you, and you give it to him, but he's super, super right here next to you, Robert. See what Robert says.

Didn't hear what you said I'm sorry.

What can people be afraid of when? Why isn't Why is spirituality scary?

Because

Because

everything at some point or another, it gets left behind. Everything gets challenged, everything gets changed. And it can be very unsettling. Thank you.

I'd follow up on that kind of more specifically. I really noticed that my feeling of connection with Mike Family and friends of origin has really diminished. I mean, I've really had a felt sense of loss of, I think, kind of shared worldview, that they seem to say, Well, you know, what, you know, common sense tells you this. And you know, as Einstein said, common sense, or all those prejudices you learn by the age of 18

most people don't see it that way.

So, you know, there's kind of

that loss of connection. So you can use a fear, the fear of that loss. And so there's as as as loss begins to happen, sometimes it does fear there's gonna be more of that, perhaps, right? loss of certain relationships, certain connections, certain shared understandings. Okay. Thank you.

follow up on that a little bit that there's

a fear of

just not

having anything to cling to, to work toward even the loss of meaning of a meaningful goal.

I mean, there's there's the goal of

awakening for sure.

But

when I

realized that all of my ideas about that are just that and

there isn't anything there either

that that gets pretty scary. And also i'd agree with the fear of

failure and something being wrong

with me if I'm not in a certain state of mind or You know, having trouble being in some idea of what the right state of mind is.

So you know if like, if you're angry that you're some people being angry, there's proof that you failed Buddhist.

Right? Or even grumpy.

You know? Yeah, it can be pretty, pretty annoying. This Buddhist Buddhist Buddhism stuff you know you haven't you hold it up as you know standards you're supposed to measure yourself by. So it was interesting. Gail, what you said about also, that's perhaps as a person does a spiritual practice. It doesn't have to just be Buddhist practice, but anyone that sometimes there's a reevaluation of one's priorities, what one's life is about and a lot of things fall, you know, don't have the same ular promise or enchantment or some you have so much meaning and then we might be replaced it with some kind of something like enlightenment, but enlightenment seems so good. And maybe even irrelevant to what's possible for me. So then we're where am I then? Something like that? Yes.

Well, first of all, yes, a big yes to everything that has been said so far. And, and then I've been working with vulnerability and meeting strengths with vulnerability. And I witness a tremendous amount of fear. Still in and going through fear and resistance. Often when confronting strengths and, and seeking and not always finding that place of vulnerability.

So you're finding fear in meeting strengthen others or in the world around you or in yourself?

Well, I don't have fear in meeting strength with strength. I have I bought I have found success and spiritual success in meeting strength with vulnerability, other people's strength, other people's strengths with vulnerability that has led me to some lovely realizations. And I wish that that meant that I could find that space with some degree of ease every time but I witness over and over again the mountain fear and essentially what that means is letting go and ultimate letting go. That fear of annihilation but it comes up for me as fear in being vulnerable.

Thank you. I mean, I suppose it's a it has to be that way. Because it can create can be vulnerability without fear.

Good play Yes.

So I'm afraid of

I don't know if it's the spirituality part or not. But my biggest fear in life, I think,

is

the fact that I'm on a path. And I don't know if I will see enlightenment or I've seen enlightenment or I keep thinking like life is always kind of go in into the next and the next the next.

And

that that lived to be 70 or 100 year old or something and then find out that

I didn't live my life, right.

That's it. That's a possibility for anyone that they look back at their life and realize they didn't live a good way. But you're afraid that you're following a spiritual that you might come to the same understanding Oh, no, I, I took the wrong path or I made the wrong choices on the path never seen the truth. Never saw the truth, Joe. Yeah, I committed myself to this path that's supposed to go to the truth. But after seven years, all this huffing and puffing, you know, that truth didn't come and so the fear of that is a disappointment or being like, damn it.

Yeah, I don't know if it's connected with spirituality specifically, but it's, it's in general in life that I will get to the end of my life and realize that I lived life wrong. I didn't see whatever I was supposed to see and do. Okay. Thank you.

Did we exhaust the possibilities? Are we all Oh,

I have the fear that

as my spiritual practice matures and I kind of relaxed and open a bit more, that I'm more sensitive to the suffering of others. And so the fear of being overwhelmed by the suffering out there.

There, there's a lot of fear in me. One of the things that causes a lot of anxiety and fear in me is the suffering of the world with global warming and it is overwhelming that you know, the I'm not I'm talking about people but also animals, plants and the suffering of the earth. And

it feels overwhelming.

It's really

you know, I think about it all the time but

and coming to terms with that in my practice and understanding that, you know, maybe it's okay that there is going to be this suffering that there is a suffering and that is the way it is and it's not on my shoulders to change, interpret, you know, go really go out and change the world except, you know, I keep trying in my backyard and that creates a struggle for me. The other suffering I have is that as I become more aware I Well, I've always been a very goal oriented person and as they become more aware of the process and where my mind is moment to moment, as I'm, you know, emptying the dishwasher and doing the laundry and oh, I have to get out of the door and you know, get to work whatever.

There is an understanding of how unsatisfactory my my interpretation of where my mind is, as I live my life moment to moment. And there is a fear that that I will only experience the unsatisfactoriness of it and that I will not get to the point, maybe it goes back to my goal oriented perspective, but that I will not get to the point where I will experience that no, this this is satisfactory this. This is Okay, thank you.

It's kind of the struggle between

my physical and my spiritual always being present in a physical way and in and working on a spiritual idea of nothingness and expansion and going into a realm where I can be in the spiritual, struggling with my everyday physical world where you know, the mundane is continually pressing on you and then trying to become a spiritual being, and releasing all of that physicality and wanting to just realize the spaciousness. Have of the, of the spirituality and not get hung up on all the physical attachments.

So I can understand I understand the tremendous struggle with that. What's the fear,

the fear, the fear is losing the physical.

You know, when you were talking about death, just just losing that, that that physical ability of being able to wake up in the morning and be something you know, rather than knowing that one day, there'll be, there'll be either, you know, the, the, the nothingness or the, or just the part of it all type thing.

So, so, a fear that arises from very strong separation or duality between the spirit spiritual realm and the physical realm, right. And somehow, those two are not going to connect or work together.

Right. there's a there's a there's a strong separation there. For instance, when the just just just on an everyday meditation situation where you're just coming in and out of the physical world and, and going into a meditational situation, you know, just that separation is kind of a jolt sometimes and, and just, you know, knowing that one day that it'll all just be the spiritual is kind of a

fear. Thank you.

Sometimes I'm afraid of

if I think about it

being over Taken by other people's fear. Sometimes I'm afraid of that, like I think of there's a scene in the movie The Titanic, where the panic made it such that all you could do was panic. Sometimes I'm afraid of that.

And how's that such as a very understandable fear? And can you connect that fear to spiritual practice?

Well, I, I've taught things. So my practice here is new. Yes. So it's a practice against a history that's different. And so I was taught many, many things, scary things that I'd like go up and I don't think about them anymore.

Sometimes I just don't know. I think awakening

There's some there's something comforting about being asleep.

Thank you. And I and certainly I apologize to you or anyone who's if there's a growing sense of foreboding here tonight

as a linear listing all the listing all these kinds of fears and some of you might be new here, I said, What have I done

with this? What are the but what are these people about?

So, there was I saw someone

I have a very real fear of becoming a hermit.

Why is that scary?

Well, maybe in the spirit of what Elaine was saying

earlier, and They're being

global needs

and really a lot of cost

for engagement. I have a fear that I'm going

to become too peaceful, too indifferent. Yeah, that's a prayer for you For you peacefulness somehow is in a position where I'll see it

as as suffering perhaps that needs to happen to someone else was saying it just

it just needs to play itself out. And I'll disengage I hesitant to say in different

but it's,

you're afraid that the practice is going to cause you to be disengaged in different kind of aloof or detached and so you're not going to respond to what's

not aloof or indifferent. It's like

equanimous in a cave

someplace, economist. Okay.

Yeah, and I think it just, you know, at the root of his

maybe some other comments You just have these frame shifts sometimes where you reevaluate some things. And for me, it's just interesting to consider if I have a frameshift and it pushes me away from surface work or from engagement work. It could totally happen.

And it's just interesting to be aware. Thank you.

Somebody. Yes.

One thing one thing that I fear

pursuing a spiritual practice is sometimes I fear that I'll become unfit for modern life and that for over a decade, I worked in a place that was very high pressure and busy busy busy, busy, busy and and I see all these people who are able to do that and I can't do that anymore. And, and I didn't really is a fear of, am I going to be unfit for modern life, it'd be so

the right mindset today. Some years ago, three, four years ago, I gave a day long retreat here for mostly mostly a group of 40 or so ninth graders. It was a very nice day they were engaged in meditation teachings and discussion for quite a while, until near the end of the day. I happened to mention to them that the last time I knew what was on television was in 1972. And I could see my credibility and I had to kind of kind of speed things up a little bit to get get them back

engaged and take me seriously.

So you know, I'm I'm fit. I'm fit for color. And so, okay, so thank you for all that. And I appreciate it a lot. That I think it's very important to name these things, especially for some people who, for whom they're actually active and present for them as they engage in meditation or Buddhist practice or spiritual practice to really look at these things. And as we look at them, it's important to address them in different

ways. Some of them require further analysis, consideration, maybe discussion with a teacher. Oh, no one said they were afraid of the teacher. Just you know, I'm not really doing my job. No, people aren't here. afraid of me.

More TV, watch more TV.

Oh, good. Good, finally.

And so anyway, so it's generalize you know, the fear and maybe talk to a teacher or talk to friends and see, you know, what's really the basis of it and is it really reasonable fear to have? Some fears arise because we hold things to idealistically some, some, some three hemispheres are mentioned today had to do perhaps with failure, success and failure. You know, I don't want to be a failure, I don't want to fail. And what's that about? Who's failing, what's failing, in whose eyes are we failing? Sometimes people are afraid of what happens to them in spiritual life, because they're afraid of what other people are going to say about them and see them. failing. Modern Life is not a problem. But the fact that everyone will reject me if I feel if I'm no longer fit for modern life, that's maybe that fear of rejection is maybe bigger. So we need to kind of begin teasing apart and looking more deeply what it is. Also, part of that analysis is to really get a better sense of what's spiritual, say this way. If you're doing Buddhist practice, to really get a good sense of what Buddhist practice really is. It's very easy to approach Buddhism. And it was generalizations big ideas of what it is. And sometimes it's important to kind of get down to specifics to really understand what the path is where the path is found. Where practice, the heart of the practice really is. And it might be that it's it doesn't result reside in the generalizations that give birth to fears. But it resides in something much more immediate, that's can be worked with here and now. Some of these fears may be our fears which we need to overcome, not stand in the way of our practice. And sometimes we just have to barrel ahead in spite of them. Sometimes we need to turn around and actually look at the fear more carefully, and bring it into mindfulness. And one of the very interesting movements that happen in mindfulness is we start questioning the role that thoughts and ideas have Enter life and a lot of the people a lot of things that people are afraid of, especially when the when there's anxiety involved ongoing fears have more to do with specific or very vague ideas about things. And so for example, I can be afraid of what some spiritual experiences are going to do to me, you know, if I'm, if I get enlightened, you know, maybe I won't be able to find my car keys. And, and, and so but then you turn around and look oh, that's just that's just a thought in the mind. Car keys, thoughts, thought in my mind. That's what's you know, you know, what's, what's that about is the thought is an idea words going through my mind. to question the role of words that we tell ourselves the image that we tell ourselves, so they don't have life. say about what our experience of reality is. One of the things that mindfulness can help us do is to realize that there's a presence there's a way of being in the world, there's a freedom in the world, that that's outside and we're steps out of the tyranny, of words and ideas of thoughts. Now to dismiss thoughts and ideas, they have an important role in our life and foreign role in finding the path but, but to realize the something about the dreamlike quality of words and ideas can help us put as much more fully into this world here, the present world, not in some kind of abstract spiritual world. And it's in this present world they absolutely concrete present world here, the real world where freedom is possible, the real world where some kind of where the path is found. And so we agree to which thoughts and ideas take us out The real world into some abstractions, idealism. You know, it's easy to be afraid. But if you kind of learn not to live in the world of ideals, but learn to a wise way of living in the world that's actual, it's actually a lot safer. And, and, and also, that's where the Buddhist path is found. Its real liberation is found, not in some abstraction.

And as we kind of, in a way, I think one of the great powers of the Buddhist path is that it shines a mirror back towards us, to a connection to what is actually real. And when once we're really in touch

with what's more real, then you can it's more obvious what where safety is so obvious where compassion is out. bees were responding to the world resides. This nut doesn't follow it exactly. But some years ago, I was working with a woman who had many years of meditation experience. But she never really brought her much mindfulness or any mindfulness to her fear. She had a fair amount of fear. She had some ability to be present and be concentrated but so we did a guided meditation guided meditation with her and I asked her to get quiet a little bit and then to evoke this chronic fear that she had and then turn around and look where did that was that fear in her body was located and I don't remember where she said because maybe she said it was in her chest. So okay, go into your chest and feel the fear there. And what does it feel like? And she described how it felt like, okay, stay with that fear. And stay with the feelings there that you have and notice what happens to it. And because she was relatively good meditator meaning she could concentrate well on it, not get caught up in thoughts and ideas and reactions just to kind of be present for it. This sensation she had her fear in the body disappeared. And when it disappeared, I said, Now what happened to the fear? And she, her eyes popped open. And she thought she, you know, she thought I've done some kind of trick, you know, where's the fear? And, and she kind of knew she was kind of disoriented. That the fear could go away that quickly, by bringing careful attention to use, feel and be present for it. Those kind of like it's a keto thing, where you turn towards the fear to either country, the experience of fear, not the abstracting we're afraid of the concrete experience in the body and really feel and be present for it. That the fear dissipated. And then, well, if the fear is gone, then what You can, you can bring it up again, if you'd like. But it taught her that the fear was not a solid thing, that the fear was not something that was kind of part of the operating principle of life. It wasn't part of the hardware, but rather it was something that comes and goes. And if it comes and goes, then it's not solid, then, you know, she could have a different relationship to the fear. She didn't have to be, take it give it so much authority. And as you give fear less authority than it has less limits us less than our life and we can act in spite of it and kind of find our way through life. I think that any spiritual discipline, any spiritual practice, that doesn't have fear as part of it is not a real spiritual path. It doesn't mean that you've got to run out here and get afraid. But as you do the path, hopefully you feel safer. Hopefully you feel like it protects you and supports you and nourishes you in many beautiful ways. And mostly, that's what you experience. But sooner or later, you're going to meet fear. And if you haven't met fear as part of your spiritual path yet, and you've been doing this for some time, then you should maybe kind of look more deeply. Maybe you need to question more deeply what you're doing, because sooner or later, some meeting of fear, because something we're going to something we're asked to look at, to confront, to be honest about, perhaps to let go of perhaps a change. And one of the fears that wasn't explicit, but an implicit may things people said one of the fears that people can have is the fear of change and If so if you're going to change through spiritual practice, that can be scary.

So

I'll end with telling you a Cohen, from the Zen tradition. And the koan is, it's a simple question. What do you do? When you climb to the top of 100 foot pole? You get to the top of the pole, what do you do then?

Kind of scary up

there. And the answer that sometimes given is you step off. So that's a kind of a colon that people interpret in many different ways. And in terms of the spiritual life, maybe climbing the pole is some great attainment. What do you get? What do you When you get that greedy payment, you let go, you step off. Don't hold on. So and then I'll say one more thing even though said I would say

there's a beautiful image or story that sometimes told the idea of, you know, letting go. Letting Go, peace can be scary. And then you let go and you fall and it's scary to fall, you fall. It's really scary to fall, because the faster you fall in, the harder you're going to hit the bottom. You keep falling and falling, until finally you realize there's no ground to hit

and then it's fine. Before

then it's kind of like flying. So to let go might seem like freefall, but maybe there's some very deep letting go in the heart where the heart is set free and it flies rather than splats. So may you all become fearless you all become free of fear. Thank you